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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 13
46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2004
INTRODUCED BY
Ray Begaye

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT ADDRESS THE CONCERNS OF NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS ATTENDING ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

WHEREAS, while approximately one-half of the nearly five thousand Native American students attending school in the Albuquerque public school district are performing at average or better, the fact remains that approximately one-half of the Native American students in the district are performing at lower than average; and

WHEREAS, while a long history of low performance among Native American students in the Albuquerque public school district exists, the school district has made little effort to address the problems encountered by Native American students,

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1 including a high dropout rate, attendance problems and low test
2 scores; and

3 WHEREAS, according to Albuquerque public school district
4 reports, Native American students attending Albuquerque public
5 schools had a dropout rate of approximately twenty percent in
6 the 1998 school year, and only thirty-two percent of Native
7 American students beginning high school in the Albuquerque
8 public school district in 1993 graduated from Albuquerque
9 public schools in 1998; and

10 WHEREAS, according to the 2001-2002 Albuquerque public
11 school district Native American one-hundred-day report card,
12 out of nearly five thousand Native American students in the
13 school district, approximately forty-five percent had a grade
14 point average below a passing grade of 2.0 and approximately
15 fifty-five percent were chronically absent, missing ten or more
16 days of school during the first one hundred days of school; and

17 WHEREAS, Native American students, specifically the
18 eighty-one percent of Native American students on the free
19 lunch program, show low terra nova test scores; and

20 WHEREAS, other education issues concerning Native American
21 students attending Albuquerque public schools exist, including
22 insufficient funding for Native American students at all levels
23 in the school district, school district employment of too few
24 Native American teachers and staff and Native American students
25 with special needs not receiving necessary help;

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1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
2 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the public education department and
3 the Albuquerque public school district be requested to conduct
4 an in-depth study of the reasons for the high dropout rate
5 among Native American students and to collaborate with the
6 Native American community to design a zero-tolerance dropout
7 policy for Native American students, to be implemented within
8 two years; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
10 department and the Albuquerque public school district be
11 requested to increase or emphasize the teaching of a Native-
12 American-based curriculum, including history, bilingual
13 education and multicultural education, in all Albuquerque
14 public schools; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
16 department and the Albuquerque public school district be
17 requested to increase the number of Native American top-level
18 administrators employed by the school district and to create a
19 superintendent position filled by a Native American educator,
20 who will collaborate with the Native American community to
21 address the needs of Native American students, including their
22 academic, cultural and linguistic needs; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
24 department and the Albuquerque public school district be
25 requested to encourage and obtain more Native American parental

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1 and community involvement in the school district's decision-
2 making processes by holding public meetings and orientation
3 sessions with the Native American community; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
5 department and the Albuquerque public school district be
6 requested to collaborate with the Native American community,
7 including Native American professionals, in the planning,
8 designing and implementing of a culturally based Native
9 American magnet school, including preschool literacy, youth
10 enrichment and arts programs; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that pursuant to the Indian
12 Education Act, the Indian education advisory committee be
13 requested to have Native American representatives from
14 Albuquerque, Gallup, Farmington and Santa Fe; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Albuquerque public school
16 district and the Albuquerque Native American community be
17 requested to co-host a town hall meeting to obtain input from
18 community members, parents and families on educating Native
19 American students; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
21 transmitted to the public education department, the
22 superintendent of the Albuquerque public school district, the
23 president of the Albuquerque public school board, the
24 Albuquerque commission on Indian affairs, the national Indian
25 youth center, the Albuquerque metro Native American coalition,

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1 the New Mexico office of Indian affairs and the interim
2 legislative Indian affairs committee.

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